

A Study on the Effects of the VALORANT eSports League in the Korean Video Game Market: Focusing on the Korean Internet Café Market Share

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Abstract: This study explores the relationship between Valorant eSports league viewership and the market share of PC Cafés in South Korea, examining the theoretical implications of how digital platform-based eSports consumption may translate into actual offline gameplay. Given the distinctive ecosystem formed by PC Cafés and eSports in Korea, this research investigates whether high viewership of the Valorant eSports League potentially drives tangible player engagement, specifically reflected in PC Café usage. The study employs publicly accessible data, including daily viewership statistics from the official Valorant Champions Tour YouTube channel and PC Café market share rates as indicators of offline gameplay participation. Through data preprocessing, descriptive statistics, and regression analysis, the research positions Valorant eSports viewership as a lens to discuss the interplay between online engagement and offline gaming. Findings suggest that online platform engagement plays a central role in prompting players to transition from spectatorship to actual PC Café visits, underscoring the need for comprehensive strategies integrating eSports broadcasting schedules, content quality, and promotional efforts.

Keywords: Valorant; eSports; PC Café; Digital Engagement; eSports Marketing

1. Research Purpose

This study aims to explore the relationship between Valorant eSports league viewership and the market share of PC Cafés in South Korea, thereby examining the theoretical implications of how digital platform-based eSports consumption may translate into actual offline gameplay. Given the distinctive ecosystem formed by PC Cafés and eSports in Korea, Valorant, an FPS title developed by Riot Games in 2020, has drawn significant attention. Accordingly, this research investigates whether high viewership of the Valorant eSports League potentially drives tangible player engagement, specifically reflected in PC Café usage.

2. Research Method

The study employs publicly accessible data, notably daily viewership statistics from the official Valorant Champions Tour YouTube channel as a proxy for eSports consumption in lieu of internal, confidential datasets. In addition, PC Café market share rates serve as an indicator of offline gameplay participation. The analysis further incorporates league scheduling variables (indicating event days and the following days) to examine how daily content exposure might be associated with PC Café market share. Through data preprocessing (imputation for missing values), descriptive statistics, and regression analysis, the research positions Valorant eSports viewership as a theoretical lens to discuss the interplay between online engagement and offline gaming.

3. Research Results

Focusing on the potential linkage between digital eSports viewership and PC Café utilization, this study

provides a theoretical discussion on how eSports operators and PC Café culture might interact. It suggests that online platform engagement could play a central role in prompting players to transition from mere spectatorship to actual PC Café visits. Detailed numerical findings and statistical evidence are presented in the main text; however, the overarching conclusion emphasizes the importance of digital content delivery and event scheduling for fostering offline participation.

4. Implications of the Study

From this theoretical perspective, the study underscores the need for comprehensive strategies that integrate eSports broadcasting schedules, content quality, and promotional efforts, rather than relying solely on expanding event days or holding more offline activities. This insight holds relevance for eSports organizers, game publishers, and PC Café operators seeking to harness the synergy between digital viewership and physical gameplay. Moreover, although the research is limited to Valorant and specific observation periods, the framework proposed here can guide further studies across different genres, regions, or extended timescales. In doing so, it could offer more concrete and practice-oriented strategies for eSports marketing and the broader game industry, reinforcing the significance of digital metrics in understanding offline player engagement.